

LOGOSOPHIA

A Pilgrim's Journal
of Life, Love & Literature



Issue #1
Winter 2020



**The Church
as the Body of Christ;
Unity, & Community**



Greetings, fellow pilgrims!

It is my great pleasure to introduce the initial issue of LogoSophia Magazine! I am delighted with the issue we have put together, largely focused on the things we all share as Christians, the Church as the Body of Christ, Unity & Community. We have theological articles, poems, personal stories and more to share with you, and we do hope you enjoy them and share them. Together, let us learn about our own faith and the beliefs of other Christians, travelling the Narrow Way in harmony, despite our varied views.

Pax!

Sarah Levesque
Editor in Chief

WANTED

- Readers of any faith to interact respectfully with writers and other readers through book/media suggestions and letters to the editor, as well as comments on LogoSophiaMag.com and social media
- Writers of Christian faith to augment the works of our Staff
- Advertisers & Donors to support us financially

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DID YOU KNOW?

We have an audio version of this issue!
Find it on Youtube and Anchor.fm

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Happy
Winter!

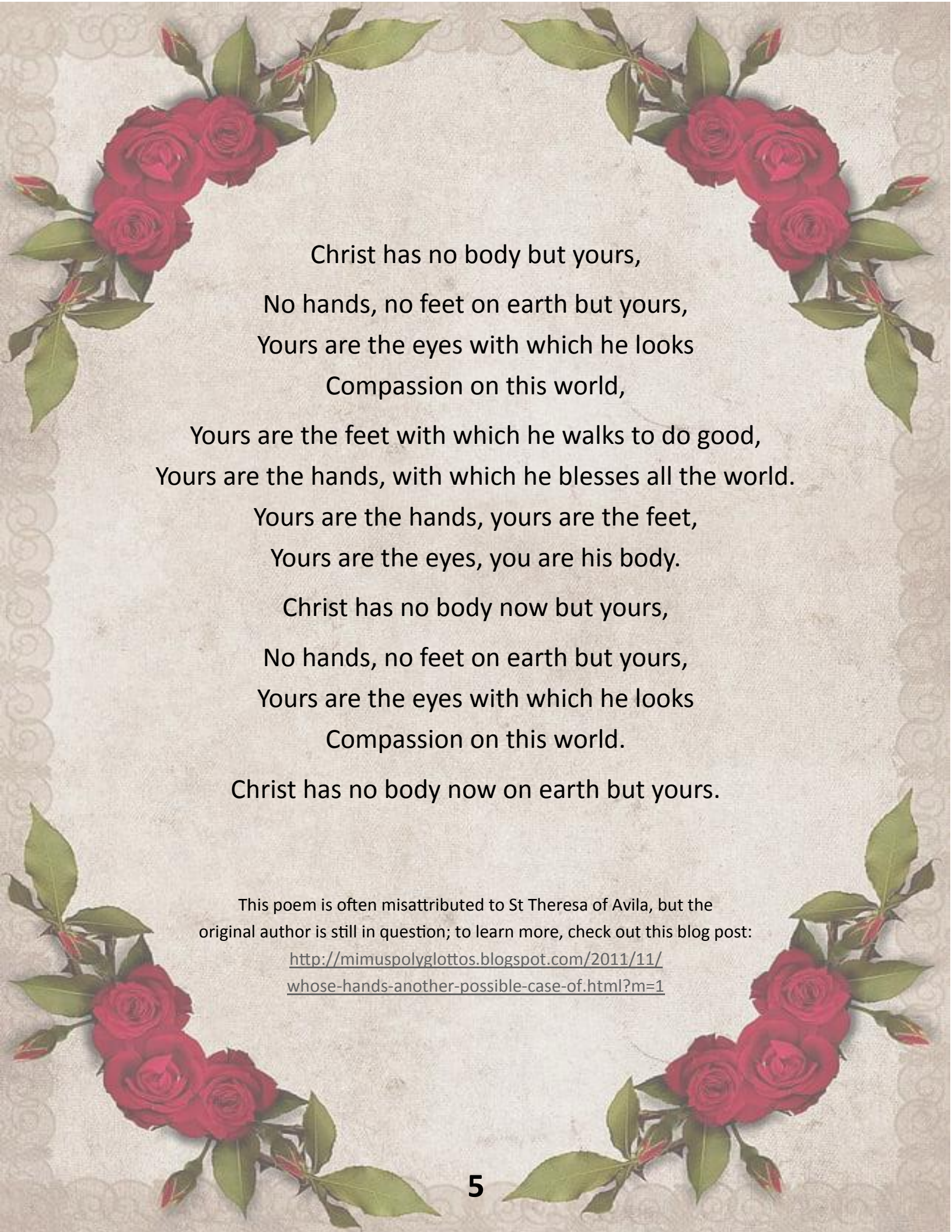


Letters to the Editor & Others

This is where we will be putting anything you send in - letters to the editor, notes to authors, questions, agreements and disagreements... we can't wait to see what you have to say! Just be sure to tell us what article you're responding to!

To contact us, email
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Christ has no body but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks
Compassion on this world,
Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good,
Yours are the hands, with which he blesses all the world.
Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,
Yours are the eyes, you are his body.
Christ has no body now but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks
Compassion on this world.
Christ has no body now on earth but yours.

This poem is often misattributed to St Theresa of Avila, but the original author is still in question; to learn more, check out this blog post:

[http://mimuspolyglottos.blogspot.com/2011/11/
whose-hands-another-possible-case-of.html?m=1](http://mimuspolyglottos.blogspot.com/2011/11/whose-hands-another-possible-case-of.html?m=1)



When God Speaks...

The story of how LogoSophia Magazine was created

By Sarah Levesque, Foundress

Lord, I present this task to you. May it give You glory!

I wasn't planning on starting a new magazine. Sure, the idea had crossed my mind, but I was already stretched rather thin across many activities: a full-time job, babysitting, running a young adult group, volunteering at a couple different religious organizations and working at an online magazine, not to mention trying to spend time with family and friends. I barely had time for my hobbies.

In 2019, my Lenten resolution was to spend at least an hour with Jesus in Eucharistic Adoration* each week. I had come to this resolution because I realized that while I talked to Jesus all the time, I didn't often sit in silence to let Him talk to me. My home parish has Adoration on Wednesdays, which provides a great way to recenter myself on Jesus midweek. While at Adoration, I use a prayer journal to write down my thoughts - what is new since the previous week, who I'm concerned about, and whatever pops into my head - same as if I was talking to any other trusted friend, often glancing up to look at Jesus in the monstrance. As Lent drew to an end, I decided I would extend my resolution to the entire year and beyond, as I noticed the difference in my life. I doubt it was noticeable to others and I can't put it into words, but I was learning to be more in tune with the will of the Lord.

In June, a good friend who was helping me learn about different faith traditions gave me a small cross and asked me to pray for the reunion of all Christians – something I was already doing regularly. I didn't realize it at the time, but this, along with other interfaith dialogue, was a seed being planted.

Meanwhile, I grew more and more restless as I worked for the online magazine I had been involved with as an employee. At one point in early summer I outlined the goals of that magazine

*Eucharistic Adoration is a Catholic devotion where a person prays in front of the consecrated Host, believed by Catholics to be the true presence (body, blood, soul & divinity) of Christ Jesus.

versus my own goals and they were rather different. I was also displeased by the structure of the organization, despite it being the typical structure of a magazine publisher, as far as I'm aware. So one July day I wrote out an outline of how I would prefer that organization to be structured. I didn't have any expectation that that outline would ever be used.

It soon became clear to me that nothing I said would change the way the magazine I was working for functioned. On July 24th, 2019, when I went to Eucharistic Adoration, I asked Him to either give me peace at my current magazine or to lead me elsewhere and give me peace there. I left it up to Him and I went on to pray for specific people and their needs. Then suddenly I started getting ideas, phrases that were disjointed but spoke to my heart. And behind it all like a soundtrack was the song "Build Your Kingdom Here" by Rend Collective. I wrote everything down and shortly understood that I was to leave my old magazine to start a new magazine, to be geared toward helping unite different Christian denominations. Before I left Adoration, I thanked God for giving me a glimpse into His plan. I knew it was His because there was no doubt in my mind that these ideas did not come from me, and there was no hesitation, only peace and excitement. Those feelings might not sound like they go together, but let me assure you that they can, when God gives you both.

As soon as I got home, I sent pictures of my prayer journal as well as my outline to a good friend who I knew would be on board with the idea. Shortly thereafter I brought on another friend, then another, until I had a whole crew of people of various Christian denominations. Starting with the structure I had outlined, we tweaked it and molded it and added to it. We bounced ideas back and forth and over the season of autumn, voting in one poll after another until we had the foundation set to our liking – (name and tagline, mission, logo, terms and conditions, etc.) – we launched our social media pages and set up a PayPal account for donations. We chose the name LogoSophia Magazine (LSM), which comes from the Greek words *Logos* and *Sophia*, respectively meaning "speech, discourse" and "wise, intelligent." Our mission is as follows: *LogoSophia Magazine seeks to create a quarterly magazine and a community dedicated to creating and cultivating connections, unity and understanding between Christian denominations, under the leadership of an elected Editor-in-Chief.*

One October day, during Adoration, I was thinking about LSM and thinking (and writing) that since it is God's work, we should be giving it to Him or praying or something before we worked. I asked Him to give me a prayer that we could use, and He gave me this: "Lord, I present this task to You; may it give You glory!" So, when I got home, I threw it out to my team, and they agreed wholeheartedly. For myself, I need a reminder or I will forget to pray before working, so I put it on a sticky note on my laptop. That didn't work well enough, so I made that prayer the background to my laptop, and now I see it every time I open it. The prayer can be used in other sectors of life too, of course, and may be tweaked to apply to more specific tasks.

The LSM year begins in November with the voting in of the Editor-in-Chief and the theme for the next calendar year. I was flattered to be elected the first Editor-in-Chief. We started posting pieces on the blog in December, we began marketing soon after, and we scheduled our first issue for February 2020. We hope to reach Christians of all sorts and encourage them to help us build a community where people can learn from people of many Christian traditions (as I have learned from my friends in different denominations), seeing not just our differences but also what we share, and discovering more about ourselves, about our faith and, ultimately, about God. It has been an exciting journey already and I leave you with this advice: When God speaks, listen – you never know where He will lead you!

**"Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening."
1 Samuel 3:9**

From Killarney Traynor
To GK Chesterton
The Paragon of Paradox
The Master of Mystery
Capable of leaping over ridiculous arguments in a single, bewildering bound

My Dear Sir,

Firstly, you should know how much I love, love, love your *Father Brown* stories. I started reading them way back when I was a teenaged Born-Again-Christian, back before the idea of conversion was even the faintest glimmer. I found your mysteries mind-twistingly good and occasionally frustratingly fantastic, your prose descriptive and fun, your characters sharp and lively, and the main character so deceptively simple and charming. But the best parts were the paradoxes. There was always a paradox with a moral twist, one that would have me wrestling with a concept or a re-imagined precept for days. You were just so bloody good at flipping the script.

As a young, somewhat insulated protestant homeschooler, I initially did not know that you'd written anything more than *Father Brown*. If you had, that would have been gift enough. It wasn't until I turned Papist that I learned the truth about your output. To say you were prolific would be like saying the Atlantic Ocean has rather a lot of water. Your biography of St. Francis is gorgeous, your book on Eugenics inspired. I love your defense of Charles Dickens. Your essays are amazing, both funny and thought provoking (one of them explained completely, in a way I couldn't articulate, why I don't generally like George Bernard Shaw's plays - seriously, thank you for that!). I dove into reading your books, enjoying everything... until I read *What's Wrong With the World*.

I read it. I liked it... mostly. But I couldn't reconcile how one so intelligent as you could go and make such out-of-date (even for your time), dismissive, and downright wrong conclusions about women's suffrage. Look, I know the Suffragettes were a pain in the royal backside on your side of the pond, but you of all people know better than to judge the whole on the basis of the extreme. For instance, you claim women want the vote because "men have the vote already". Kind of insulting and definitely dismissive. Envy might have motivated some women, but not all. There were definite reasons for wanting the vote and definitive forms of action taken to get it. Your chief argument against women's suffrage seems to be because you want her out of "the mob" (not the Chicago variety, but the throw-stones-at-government-buildings type). Now, I'm not as familiar with British politics as I am with the American variety, but over here, voters are considered mature, responsible citizens. Mobs are what peasants become to fight tyrants, what subjects are forced to do when the law has no other method to register a grievance. It's a technique used by the powerless, not the empowered. In my own Republic, suffrage makes you a full citizen, endowing you with the right to have your say about taxation, laws, and who should run the state. Suffrage makes you responsible for the government: in essence, it destroys the mob by making it culpable for those in power.

You had other arguments of course, generally noting the foolishness of the voter and the supreme power of the woman at home. (I won't debate you on homemaking - I think it's possibly the most influential job on the face of the earth. I just don't see how adding the ability to vote on a town ordinance changes a homemaker's job or influence.) I read your arguments, I may have thrown the book a few times, and then I spent the next three weeks arguing with anyone else who would listen about why you were wrong about women's suffrage. It was a shock, you see, for it was the first time I realized that you didn't just write paradoxes - you were one as well.

To be fair, we all are. We all make grand stands and proclamations about How One Ought to Live One's Life and then go and do the exact opposite. I know I have and I still do.

It wasn't only your stance on women's suffrage that annoyed me. You supported distributionism, too. I refer to you any co-op and ask you to explain how, well intentioned though they may be, you could hope to have a government or a big business work any better. The Great War was another issue. You were a faithful Christian, demonstrably believing in the sanctity of human life. Yet you enthusiastically supported and wholeheartedly backed the Great War, a farcical conflict with no clear *raison d'être* or objectives. Knowing that you couldn't fight yourself, you used your considerable talents of prose and poetry to talk the youth of your nation into marching off into the trenches, and then worked to drag us Americans in as well. Thanks for that. (That's sarcasm, by the way - as if my country didn't have enough to do without getting involved in a European family feud.)

These inconsistencies nagged at me for the longest time. I had a high opinion of your wisdom, wit, and writing prowess. I couldn't reconcile our difference of opinion and that drove me to read more about you: biographies, articles, opinion pieces, history, and more of your essays than I can count. I discussed and argued your theories with people whom I respected, who have an even higher opinion of you than I did. I wrestle with you and your ideas still. I'll probably never stop contending with you and really... that's kinda awesome.

Disagreeing with you forced me to reconsider my positions and my own arguments, to refine and redefine my ideas and ideals. Reading about you helped me to understand the times you lived in and lead me to learn about your intellectual descendants: CS Lewis (a childhood favorite of mine), JRR Tolkien, Graham Greene, Dorothy L. Sayers, Evelyn Waugh, among others. You inspired me to learn more about the women's movement in my own country and I gained a greater respect for the American Suffragists. I learned more about the Second Vatican Council, the World Wars, the Great Depression, the end of the British Empire, the rise of socialism, fascism, and Nazism, and the culture of defeat and despair that you, in your own way, fought so hard against. By wrestling with you, I grew stronger. I learned, too, that great wit, great prose, and imaginative reasoning abilities cannot shield one from making errors in judgement. You were not an intellectual island. I, with my far inferior reasoning abilities, cannot hope to be any better.

Make no mistake, I still disagree with you about universal suffrage (Votes for Women!), I think distributism is a childish fantasy, and I cannot justify your stance on World War One. But your works and your arguments, especially the ones that infuriated me, inspired me to be a better human, a better citizen, and a better Christian. The *Father Brown* series is a treasured favorite and I have yet to come up with a better argument against eugenics than the one you provided.

Your essays continue to delight, challenge, and inspire me, even as some of your arguments baffle me. Your wit and powerful prose is something to aspire to. And you yourself are a paradox, a fully human puzzle I shall never quite work out. But it sure is fun to try.

So thank you, GK. It's been a blast. I can't wait for our next debate.

Yours, with renewed admiration,

Killarney Traynor

Match the Bible verse to its citation!

1. In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.
2. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
3. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.
4. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

A. Genesis 1:1

B. John 3:16

C. John 1:14

D. John 1:1

Catholic

By Amanda Pizzolatto



Catholic is a word that means universal
As Apostles spread the Word
Triune God, Lord of all Creation
Holy is He Who calls to you
One Body, one path into His Kingdom
Light your way with His Holy name
Ignore false hope and false pleasures
Come, all you who suffer, come home.

Book & Media Recommendations

Shadow of the Bear by Regina Doman (book, originally published 1997): The retelling of the fairy tale Rose Red & Snow White, set in the New York City of the late '90s. When two high-school-aged sisters realize their new friend is in danger, they decide to help him against his own wishes. -Sarah

Joan of Arc by Mark Twain (book, originally published as *Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc* by the Sieur Louis de Conte in 1896): The product of 12 years of research and considered by the author to be his own best work, Twain's novelized life of the legendary French warrior is human, occasionally hilarious, ultimately heartbreaking, and overall a terrific introduction to the youthful saint. -Killarney

What Made Jesus Mad?: Rediscover the Blunt, Sarcastic, Passionate Savior of the Bible by Tim Harlow (book & audiobook, published 2019): Tim Harlow dives into the deeper meaning of Jesus' anger in the Gospels, helping us understand how to approach hypocrisy and prejudice as Christ has already done. Listen to the audiobook for the best way to experience Harlow's incredible mix of humor and insightfulness. -Liz

As The World Bleeds by Theocracy (music album, released 2011) Powerful lyrics and music by Christian Power Metal band, Theocracy. -Ian

Three to Get Married by Fulton J. Sheen (book, first published 1951): Sheen gives us valuable insight into why there's more involved in marriage than just the two people getting married. -Amanda

more

Book & Media Recommendations

Gift of the Tortoise by Ladysmith Black Mambazo (music album, released 1994): An album length folktale about a tortoise named Fadugazi introducing children to the traditional music of the Zulu people. One of the first albums ever purchased for me, this folk album has brought me many, many, hours of joy. -TK

The Jeweler's Shop by Karol Wojtyla, later St. Pope John Paul II (book, written in 1960) A fictional tale told in poem format about good and bad marriages and the effects it can have on the future. -Amanda

The Ballad of the White Horse by G.K. Chesterton (book, originally published 1911): The last great Epic Poem in the English Language, *The Ballad of the White Horse* tells the story of the victory of Christian King Alfred the Great over the pagan Vikings. -Ian

Disney's *Fantasia 2000* (movie, released 2000): An anthology film of various musical compositions and accompanying short animated films. My favorite of which is "The Firebird", the story of a fairy, her friend an elk, and the ferocious Firebird. The Fantasia films aren't everyone's cup of tea, but give it a try! -TK

Atlantis (movie, released 2001) This classic Disney film never fails to delight me and my family. Set in 1914, just as World War One breaks out in Europe, a young American archeologist finds proof of Atlantis. With an ancient book inherited from his grandfather, and a crew from all over the world and all walks of life, he begins his quest for the lost city. -Chris

The Day Boy and the Night Girl by George MacDonald (book, originally published 1882): One of MacDonald's finest and rarest fairy tales, telling the story of a wicked witch, a damsel and a warrior. The Damsel is the real hero of the story, but to tell more would enter spoiler territory. -TK

Wow Hits 2013 (music album released 2012) A collection of hits from various well-recognized Christian musicians, this album has strengthened me when I was weak, cheered me up when I was sad and helped me praise the Lord whether I was full of joy or pain. -Sarah

St. Dominic's Family by Sister Mary Jean Dorcy (book, first published 1964):

A thick volume full of short summaries about each and every blessed, saint, and venerable belonging to the Dominican Order.

-Amanda

21 Years by TobyMac (music single, released 2020) Christian rapper TobyMac's new single about the sudden passing of his eldest son is a beautifully heart-breaking exploration of life, loss, and faith during one of life's most devastating tests. -Killarney

With Fire and Sword by Henryk Sienkiewicz (book, originally published 1884): Sienkiewicz tells a classic story of adventure and romance, set in 17th century Poland and Ukraine. Pan Jan Skshetuski, a Polish nobleman, struggles to save his betrothed from a wild Cossack, even as all Ukraine erupts in rebellion against the Polish king. -Chris

Incarnation in Words

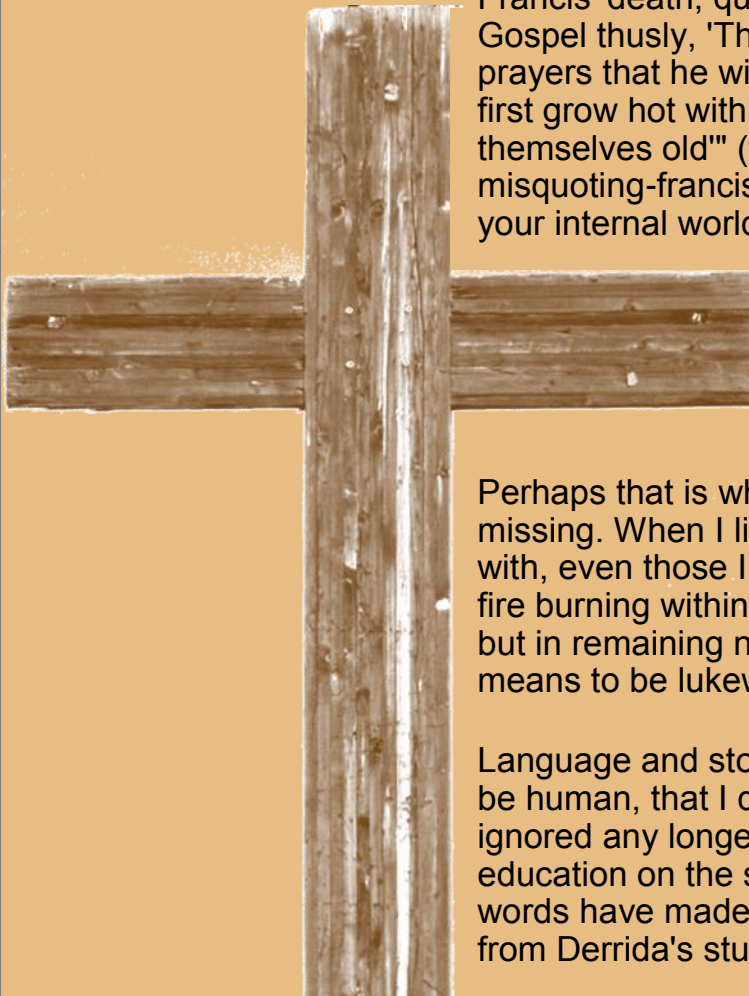
By Jamison N.

Lately I've been reflecting on words. I'm naturally a quiet person, and I don't always know how to navigate religious discussions or debates. I find that by keeping my words to a minimum, I can avoid getting mired in controversy. So I'm a good listener to many of my friends.

There is a famous quote attributed to St. Francis: "Preach the Gospel at all times, and when necessary, use words." In fact, I've used this quote as a guide on how to be respectful of other points of view. It makes sense. Love people by your actions, follow the example of Christ, love the outcast, turn the other cheek.

As I have made new friends who have different views than me, I have learned that there is incredible value in being a good listener. "The one who gives an answer before he listens—that is his folly and his shame" (Proverbs 18:13 NET). I've been able to make friends with people who disagree, by showing them respect.

The truth is, however, that Francis of Assisi never said this quote about preaching the Gospel. Rather, "his first biographer, Thomas of Celano, writing just three years after Francis' death, quotes him instructing his co-workers in the Gospel thusly, 'The preacher must first draw from the secret prayers that he will later pour out in holy sermons; he must first grow hot within before he speaks words that are in themselves old'" (thegospelcoalition.org/article/factchecker-misquoting-francis-of-assisi/). I think one facet of this is that your internal world and the external world are connected.



Remain in silence for a few minutes, and maybe notice a candle inside your own soul. In prayer, it grows hot, but without sharing the fire, the pressure only builds.

Perhaps that is why my spiritual life can feel like something is missing. When I listen, I try to remain neutral. Others I speak with, even those I strongly disagree with, have a passionate fire burning within them behind their words which I admire, but in remaining neutral, I feel passionless. Is this what it means to be lukewarm?

Language and stories are so very integral to what it means to be human, that I don't think exercising my own voice can be ignored any longer. I'm only at the beginning of a lifelong education on the subject, but from what I have gleaned so far words have made the careers of generations of philosophers, from Derrida's study in the field of Semiotics to Ricoeur's

concept of Narrative Identity. I'm never going to attain their level of understanding, nor do I want to win any theological debates, but with words, I can be a human and interact with other people, however imperfectly.

Something I never really learned until long after college was that reading, writing and sharing are a triad, three necessary ingredients, like sugar, yeast and flour, that are necessary for proper learning. Reading is not enough. Writing is not even enough. Ideas must be shared. "From the fruit of a person's mouth his stomach will be satisfied" (Proverbs 18:20 NET). Words allow me to communicate with my friends and opponents, to edify, question, doubt, believe. It allows me to be human.

Words are involved in my prayers and in song. I think this is also part of being human. Our ability to encounter an ineffable presence that we cannot understand is made possible through words of prayer. Words are our limitation as humans, but they are also our gift. I think words are a good place to look for God, who meets us where we are. "In the Beginning was the Word," seems to imply God making himself known in human terms.

I recently learned an old Latin expression, "*Et Incarnatus Est.*" This Latin phrase, as far as I can understand, means that God is made flesh in the person of Jesus. This is a privilege of the Christian faith, that God makes himself available to us, that God entered into history. In his book, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration*, Pope Benedict explains that *Et Incarnatus Est* means that the Christian faith is one based in real historical events. In reflecting on words, this makes me think that through words, God is also made approachable today. I find it fascinating how words are so difficult to master, but through the Grace of God, they allow us to connect with the Almighty. This is a beautiful expression of Divine Grace. Jack Taylor writes, "If grace is the water of life, prayer is the container from which it is poured" (Jack Taylor, *Prayer: Life's Limitless Reach*).

I think this point is often missed when talking about prayer. Often times prayer is understood to be a way of changing your life, healing the sick, or healing the land. If prayer is left unanswered, one can wonder why prayer is important. I'm beginning to understand that prayer is an expression of grace, because it allows imperfect human means to connect with a Divine God, in a way we cannot comprehend. Words align our heart with the words of Jesus.

In the process we learn to trust. Speaking of trust, one of my friends said it well, "Jesus taught us to trust him, who is love." I believe these words bring out the essence of what faith means to me. For me, that is the inner fire that St. Francis was referring to. It is Jesus teaching us to trust him, echoed by the famous words, "Jesus, I trust in You." Ultimately, this is what I want to share with others.

I am naturally so quiet and reticent, but I cannot deny that it is through proclaiming with words that others learn about the goodness of God. I am slowly learning how and why sharing is so important to me as a human being, Listening and showing love helps me to respect others, but it is only through prayer, and letting a fire grow within, that really allows the Gospel to be proclaimed in my life.



TRUE WISDOM

BY IAN WILSON

In the modern, English-speaking world, we've lost our definition of wisdom. We've come to believe that wisdom and knowledge are one and the same. This is not how our forebears defined wisdom. The Biblical definition of a fool is one who is devoid of moral understanding. Likewise, Strong's Exhaustive Bible Concordance defines wisdom as a moral quality, rather than an intellectual quality. Knowledge is just facts. Wisdom is how we use those facts. Wisdom is the ability to use knowledge in a righteous way. Anyone can have knowledge. Some of the greatest dictators and criminals in history were highly educated. But true wisdom is a spiritual gift from God.

When one has the ability to absorb knowledge, it is all too easy to become puffed up with pride. I speak from experience. When one is well versed in Christian teaching, it is easy to see those who disagree or are



simply not as well educated, as inferior. But as the great 15th-century writer Thomas à Kempis wrote "Better is the humble peasant, that serveth God, than the proud philosopher, who, destitute of the knowledge of himself, can describe the course of the planets." Ultimately, it doesn't matter how much knowledge you have in your head if you treat people poorly.

True knowledge of God ought to make us humble. It ought to remind us how desperately we need Jesus to save us. It ought to remind us how much God loves us, and bears with our infirmities, and it should cause us to show greater charity to our neighbors. True wisdom acknowledges our moral and intellectual

deficiencies and bears with those of our neighbors with patience. One of my greatest heroes, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, once said, “Nothing that we despise in other men is inherently absent from ourselves. We must learn to regard people less in the light of what they do or don't do, and more in light of what they suffer.” Proverbs 6:17 says that there are seven things that the Lord hates; one of them is “a proud look”. As James 3:13-18 says, “Who is wise and understanding among you? Show by your good life that your works are done with gentleness born of wisdom.” And again “But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy.”

I am not saying that we should never call out hypocrisy or false doctrine; the Bible calls us to speak against false doctrine. In the book of Proverbs, Solomon tells us to answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own eyes. But in the same breath, he says that we should not answer a fool according to his folly, lest we be like him. What he meant here is that there is a delicate balance to be maintained, lest we fall into the same sins. We should carefully examine ourselves before we presume to correct others. Many who spread false doctrine do so without knowing it, and we should lovingly and patiently correct them.

The Bible is not a club to beat down those we disagree with; it's a sword. In Norse mythology, Freyr, king of the elves, had a magic sword which would wield itself if wise be he who wields it. The Word of God is the same way. It will wield itself if wise be he who wields it. We need to wield the Word with wisdom, only under the direction of the Holy Spirit.

To quote Thomas a Kempis once again, “The more thou knowest, and the better thou understandest, the more severe will be thy condemnation, unless thy life be proportionally more holy. Be not, therefore, exalted, for any uncommon skill in any art or science; but let the superior knowledge that is given thee, make thee more fearful, and more watchful over thyself.”



Knowledge is power, and as Spiderman says, with great power comes great responsibility. When Christ returns, let us all hope that we have used the knowledge given to us with the wisdom of the Spirit, and not in our own earthly understanding.

Suffering

By Billy Beauchesne

The quiet one is often wise. Often we find ourselves deeply drawn to people who are more on the quiet side, because although they are quiet, they almost always have great wisdom as well. Wisdom, especially at such a young age, comes from having lived through pain and suffering. Those pains and sufferings allow us to gain perspective of the world. We all go through stages in life when we progress through a journey where we seem to be a different person at each stop along the way. There are often many barriers we face in life, whether because of culture, language, or society. We may feel as though we are not able to communicate as effectively as we would like; however, one thing that I have learned through my own pain and suffering, and through having met many friends from various cultures throughout the world, is that there is truly only one true culture in this world and that is the culture of God. Although we are all different, we must strive to truly begin to live the culture of God.

God is often able to work, without speaking, through individuals to touch many lives, allowing the quiet whisper of wisdom to be shown through acts of humility. If we quiet our own lives, we will be able to see the whisper of God in the lives of others. For each of us, we go through great times of growth and maturity. At the very beginning, we find ourselves still very much attached to the ways of the world, but as time progresses and our faiths deepen in our own personal lives, we begin to separate ourselves from society and culture.

Regardless of where we come from, what our culture says, what the American culture or any world culture says, we must remember that there is only one true culture and that is the culture of God. We can make excuses and live our lives blaming the world and our environments for problems we have in our lives, but it doesn't matter where we come from or what our history or our family history is. Through God, we all have the power to make a change. When we begin to live the culture of God in our own lives, we are able to break free from the dark path on which society has placed us.

A few thoughts...

We all seem to be travelling a similar path. We are in the process of making God the Lord of our lives. Although that concept is amazing, it is also very difficult as our own thoughts, fears, and desires tend to distract us. We all come from a background of great imperfection. We have all experienced some very difficult times in life; some things that were our own fault and some things that were not. These two following scripture passages bring great comfort in light of suffering. The first is:

Hebrews 2:18

*"Because He Himself was tested through what He suffered,
He is able to help those who are being tested."*

Our lives have been filled with challenges, sufferings, and pain but view that as a blessing. It takes years to understand that in one's own life. A priest once said that Jesus loves us so much that He wants to share with us His passion. That is the most intimate gift that any person can be given. When we are able to walk hand in hand with Jesus Christ through the most difficult time of His life, up until His death on the cross, our relationship with Jesus becomes truly deep. This doesn't make our hurts and pains go away, just as Jesus was still crucified on the cross, but it allows us to know that He is by our side and inviting us to be by His side every step of the journey.

The second:

Hebrews 5:7-10

"In the days when He was in the flesh, He offered prayers and supplications with loud cries and tears to the One who was able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His reverence. Son though he was, He learned obedience from what He suffered; and when He was made perfect, He became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey Him, declared by God high priest according to the order of Melchizedek."

This shows us that Jesus was truly human as well. We have many struggles with imperfection, but although He was God He was still human and He was made perfect through obedience and suffering, which is something we all struggle with. The pains we have in our lives are our purification, which allow us to become closer to God. Jesus, in His humanity, begged, cried, and asked God to save Him from death. But that was not the will of God and Jesus followed through with God's will, becoming the salvation for us all. That is so beautiful!

During times of desolation we go through some deep purification. Sometimes it takes completely losing ourselves and hitting rock bottom, to find a relationship with God. Many times we lean on outside sources for consolation, but by doing so we can never find it. We need to continue to strive to do God's will - only through His will, will we find true consolation.

Editor's note: Scripture from the New American Bible: Revised Edition

Billy Beauchesne is the founder and president of JESUS aCROSS the Border, an umbrella organization for Catholic young adult groups.



CONTROVERSY CORNER

Introduction

What is Controversy Corner?

Controversy Corner is the section of LogoSophia Magazine where people of different faith traditions discuss controversial topics in a succinct manner.

If you would like to submit a topic for discussion, please let us know!

Don't see your denomination represented? Help us fix that! We're always looking for new writers!

Disagree with the representative of your denomination? Write in and tell us why in a respectful manner, and we'll publish it in our next magazine under "Letters to the Editor & Comments"!

For these and any other questions, comments or suggestions, email us at Editors.LogoSophia@gmail.com.

Presbyterian Church In America: Joshua David Ling

I am currently in the PCA and consider myself a Reformed Presbyterian. Growing up I was part of many different Presbyterian denominations and I find the Presbyterian understanding of Church history, Government, and the Bible to plainly show that the greatest understanding of Scripture rests within it's denominational boundaries (the exception to this being the PCUSA of modern years). The "Frozen Chosen" is a common criticism of Calvinists and particularly Presbyterians, and it's a legitimate criticism many times. But at the same time, I find that Presbyterians know their own faults better than many other congregations. That is one reason I continue where I am planted. If doctrine is in place, the heart may follow. Or at least, that is my hope. I believe what is said in the Westminster Confessions (1646 Original) with two very minor caveats that I can exposit via Scripture.

CONTROVERSY CORNER

Introduction

Reformed Catholic: Ian Wilson

To define who I am in terms of theology and practice would be... challenging. I attend a Reformed Protestant church, but I pray the daily offices using the 1928 Book of Common Prayer like a traditional Anglican. I use the term “Reformed Catholic” to describe myself. Of course, my Roman Catholic friends would say I’m not Catholic at all. I disagree with their employment of the term. What I mean by that is that there have been certain doctrines and practices that have historically been a part of Christianity since ancient times. I believe that these doctrines and practices are “catholic” in the sense that they are universal, or ought to be universal. Over time, the Western Church distorted those beliefs, and the goal of the Reformation was to set things right. Unfortunately, I think some reformers took it too far. I believe in many of the Reformation doctrines, like Faith Alone and Grace Alone, because I find them to be scriptural and traditional. I also believe that many of the doctrines and practices of Rome are not necessarily “wrong” or “bad”. We’ll find out who’s right when the time comes.

Roman Catholicism: Sarah Levesque

I am a cradle Catholic - both my parents grew up Roman Catholic and they raised myself and my brothers in the same manner. I went to a private Catholic high school after being homeschooled through eighth grade. Now, you might think I’m an oblivious bubble child, but my boundaries were widened gradually until college, when I was free to find my own way. I am a logical person and I was given a good schooling in reason and logic, Scripture, Catholic beliefs and more. And I remain Catholic for many reasons, the most important one being that I have never found a Catholic doctrine that is denied by the Bible. On the contrary, every doctrine I have examined due to someone else’s challenge has been rooted in Scripture, Tradition, and reason. I know full well that many who profess to be Catholic don’t seem to follow the full teachings of the Catholic Church, particularly people in the political sector and those highlighted by the media. But I refuse to leave something good simply because others ignore, belittle or distort it. Therefore, I proudly remain Roman Catholic.

CONTROVERSY CORNER

Introduction

Ruthenian Byzantine Catholic: Christopher Woods

Though I was baptized Roman Catholic, my family joined the Eastern Catholic Church shortly afterwards. The reason was simple: the Eastern Catholic Church preserved a richness of tradition and beauty that the Roman Catholic Church had largely abandoned after the Second Vatican Council. However, we are still in communion with the Pope of Rome, and we do regard as valid the same twenty-one Ecumenical Councils, including the Second Vatican Council. And to be fair, not all Roman Catholic churches have abandoned tradition and beauty in favor of modernism.

The Eastern Catholic churches are far more ethnic-based when it comes to traditions. The church I attend is mainly full of people with ancestry from Carpatho-Ruthenia, the region where Poland, Slovakia, and Ukraine all border each other. Judging from appearance, one might assume we were Orthodox. Our prayers and melodies have far more in common with their Orthodox counterparts than with their Roman Catholic ones. This is because Carpatho-Ruthenia was Orthodox until the seventeenth century, when some bishops from the region agreed to return to a state of communion with Rome, provided they could keep their own Slavic traditions. I myself have remained in this tradition because I have grown to love it as my home. One does not enter a church on Sundays and holy days and forget about it the rest of the time. Rather, one lives in the Church constantly. And I would not want to call any other church home.



Excerpts from *Canticum Caritatis*

By Michael Hoogasian

Midnight Streams' Canticum Caritatis (A Song of Charity) is essentially a 50 page poetic summary of salvation history with over 800 cross references in scripture. It is a useful tool for Bible studies, personal reflection, and small group discussions related to God's love story to all people. It can be found along with all of Michael's work at www.lulu.com/spotlight/sharkangel/

Mysterious Ways Revealed

Upon seeing their great leader crucified right next to thieves,¹⁴³

Hope was lost as it seemed because who could have believed

The real Messiah would let this happen and in death just simply leave?

And so fearful for their own lives, they hid where they could grieve.¹⁴⁴

With the people of the covenant being like a stubborn daughter,

To reunite with the wayward flock, He passionately sought her,¹⁴⁵

The Suffering Lord's Servant was led like a lamb to slaughter,¹⁴⁶

Freely laid down His life and with His blood He bought her.¹⁴⁷

For behind the scenes beneath the ground in the land of all the dead,

Hades could not hold back Christ, for by the blood He shed,

God would raise Him from the grave to be the Church's head,¹⁴⁸

Giving life to those who loved Him because He did all that was said.

And fulfilling all the promises that the prophets had foretold,¹⁴⁹

The good news of the Lord would reach the young and very old:¹⁵⁰

Jesus Christ was crucified to ransom what man sold,

And in His resurrection did bring the lost back to the fold.¹⁵¹

And when complete with a smile and a nod

They said, "This is good because I AM God."

And who could have finished a masterpiece like this?

The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost with canticum caritatis.

A Holy Mission

The overjoyed apostles had seen their Lord alive,

Not a ghost, but in the flesh His life force had revived,¹⁵²

And according to the master plan of old They had contrived

The faithful had to wait until the Advocate arrived.¹⁵³

Christ Ascended, returned to the Father's right hand side,¹⁵⁴

And sent the Holy Spirit to continue to teach and guide,¹⁵⁵

So that every tongue and nation could live although they died,¹⁵⁶

For evangelization every gift from then on was grace supplied.¹⁵⁷

As Peter with the twelve preached the Gospel to the Jews,

They were ridiculed by some, who thought them drunk on booze,¹⁵⁸

But filled with the Holy Spirit, they knew they couldn't lose,

And so boldly spread the Word of God and let every person choose.¹⁵⁹

They baptized in Their Name, as was commissioned by the Son,

Prayed that all the faithful would live lovingly as one,¹⁶⁰

And until earthly death had claimed them their work was never done,

For every person that they reached was another soul He won.¹⁶¹

And as the Church was born with a smile and nod,

They said, "This is good because I AM God."

And who could have left behind a legacy like this?

The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost with canticum caritatis.



Biblical references by line:

- 143. Isaiah 53:12; Mark 15:27; Luke 23:32-33, 39-43
- 144. Mark 16:14; John 20:19-20
- 145. Ezekiel 34:11-16; Matthew 15:24; Luke 15:4-10, 19:10
- 146. Isaiah 53:7
- 147. Acts 20:28; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, 7:23; Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:20
- 148. 1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 4:15, 5:23; Colossians 1:18
- 149. Psalm 22:1-32; Isaiah 53:1-12; Daniel 9:24; Luke 24:25-27, 44; Acts 3:11-26; 1 Peter 1:10-11;
- 150. Daniel 7:14; Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:14-15; Luke 2:10, 24:44-47; Acts 1:8
- 151. 2 Corinthians 5:18-19; Colossians 1:20; Romans 5:1-11
- 152. Matthew 28:1-20; Mark 16:1-11; Luke 24:1-48; John 20:1-31, 21:1-25
- 153. Luke 24:49; John 14:15-18, 26; Acts 1:4-8
- 154. Psalms 110:1; Mark 16:19-20; Luke 24:50-53; Acts 1:9-11; Hebrews 1:1-4, 8:1; Ephesians 1:20; 1 Peter 3:22
- 155. Psalms 104:30; Acts 2:1-4, 15:8
- 156. John 5:24, 8:51, 11:25-26
- 157. Romans 12:1-8; 1 Corinthians 12:1-11; 2 Corinthians 4:7; Ephesians 4:7-16; 1 Peter 4:10-11
- 158. Acts 2:1-13; 1 Corinthians 14:1-25
- 159. Acts 9:27-28, 14:3, 18:24-28, 19:8; Ephesians 6:19-20; Philippians 1:12-14; 2 Timothy 2:9
- 160. Acts 4:32-35; Romans 15:5; 1 Corinthians 1:10; Ephesians 4:1-6; Philippians 2:1-3; Colossians 3:14-15; 1 Peter 3:8
- 161. 1 Corinthians 9:19-27, 10:33; 2 Corinthians 4:7-18; 1 Timothy 4:16; James 5:19-20; Jude 1:21-23

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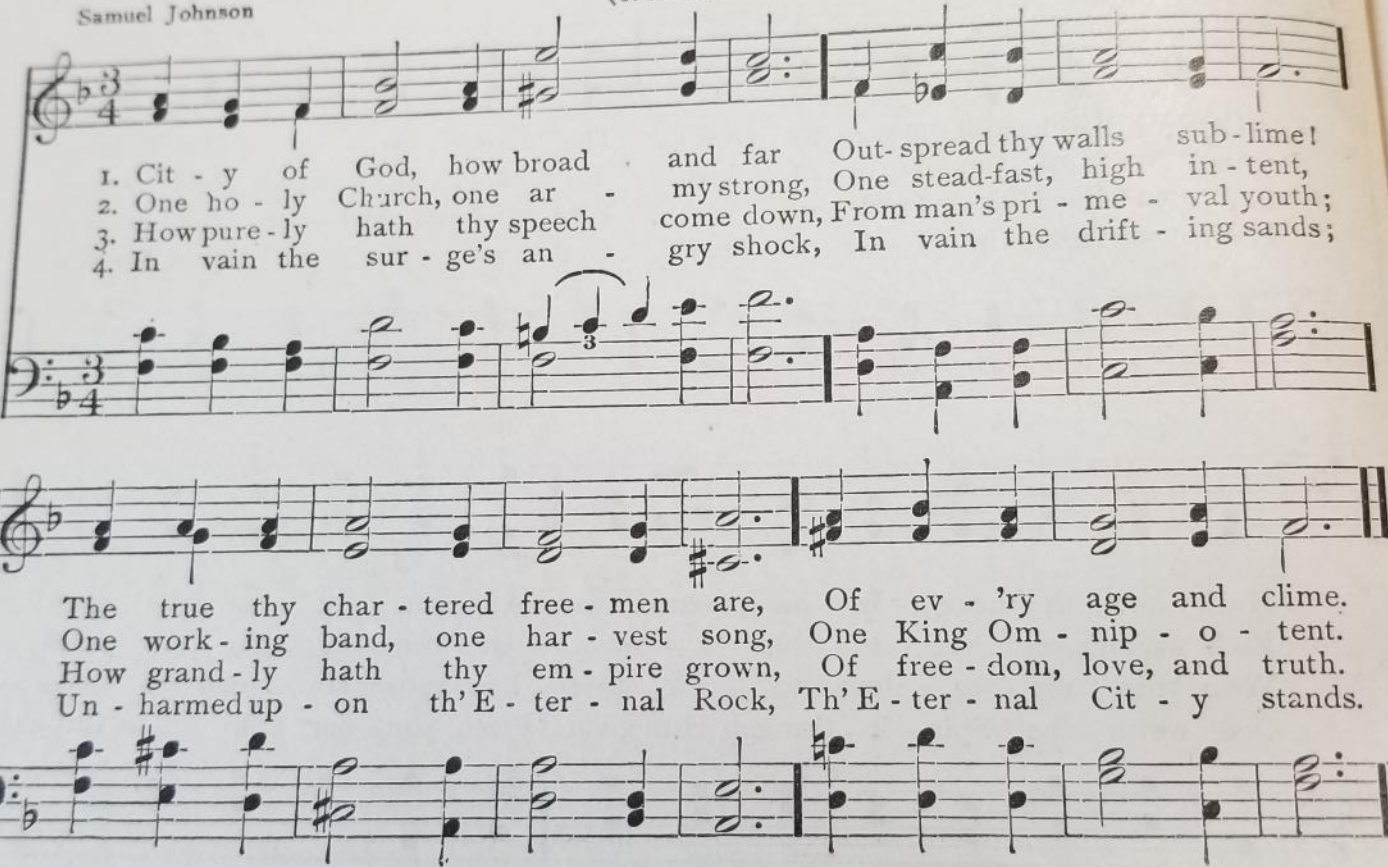
Ever heard this hymn?

Let us know!

PRAISE

City of God
(8. 6. 8. 6)

7 Samuel Johnson R. De W. Mallary, 1901



1. Cit - y of God, how broad and far Out-spread thy walls sub-lime!
2. One ho - ly Church, one ar - my strong, One stead-fast, high in - tent,
3. How pure - ly hath thy speech come down, From man's pri - me - val youth;
4. In vain the sur - ge's an - gry shock, In vain the drift - ing sands;

The true thy char - tered free - men are, Of ev - 'ry age and clime.
One work - ing band, one har - vest song, One King Om - nip - o - tent.
How grand - ly hath thy em - pire grown, Of free - dom, love, and truth.
Un - harmed up - on th'E - ter - nal Rock, Th'E - ter - nal Cit - y stands.

Copyright, 1901, by U. S. C. E.

The above is a photograph of the hymn as found in *The Endeavor Hymnal for Young Peoples' Societies, Sunday Schools & Prayer Meetings*, published 1901. To hear this song, visit youtube.com/watch?v=A_gaUjVyB8.

A string of prayer beads, likely a rosary, is draped across the top of the page. The beads are light blue and white, with a large, ornate silver cross at the bottom. The background is a light, textured surface.

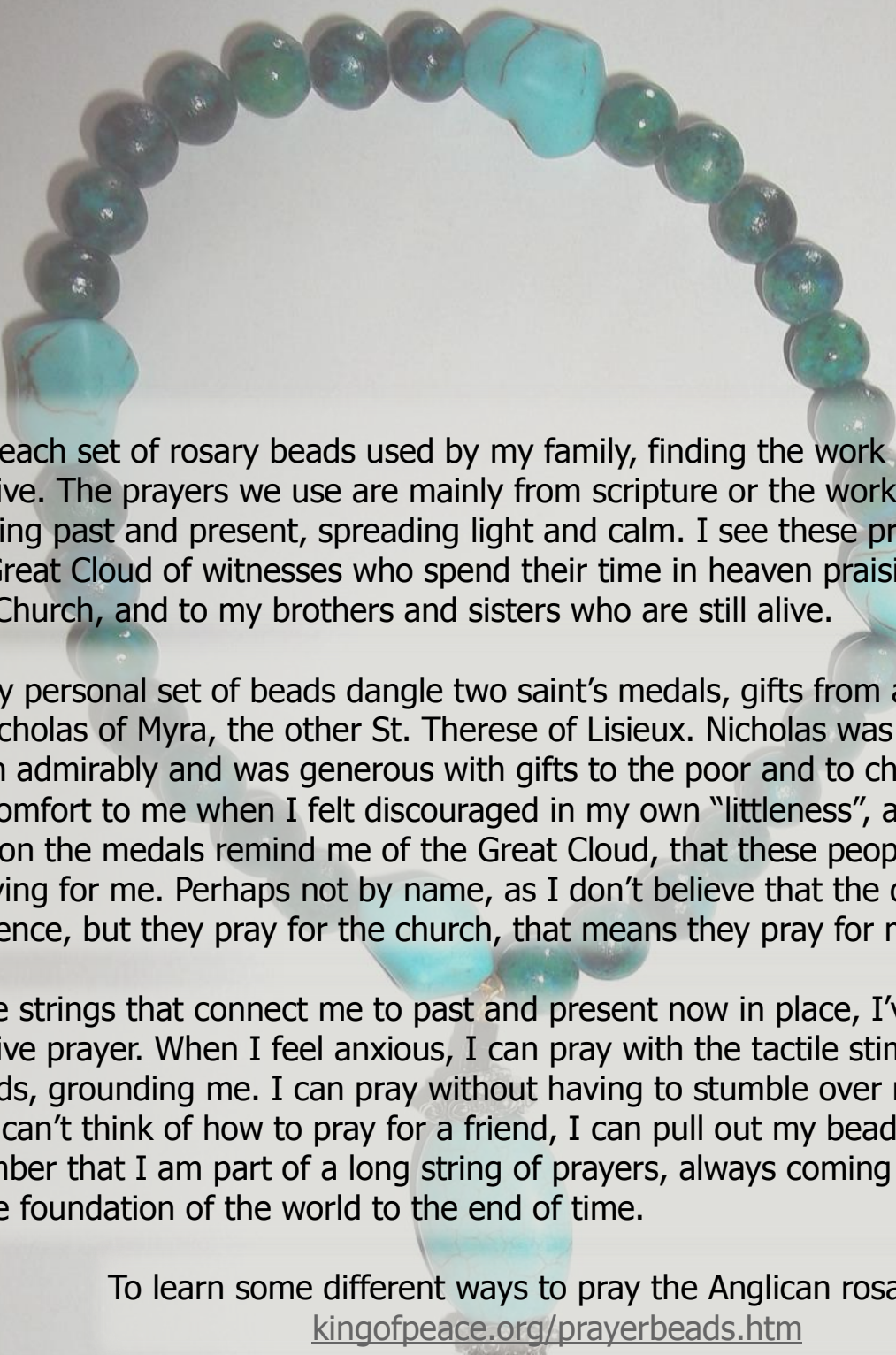
Strings

By Rose Therese

Between high school and college, I volunteered at a Catholic elementary/middle school. At the time, I didn't know what to do with the church of Rome, and the resident nun, Sister Rita, terrified me, but I loved the library. The library is where they stored the majority of the icons not currently in use around the school. It being a school dedicated to the Holy Family, there were many icons of Mary and Joseph placed up high on the shelves; but there was one statue of Mary that was arresting. She was painted, for one, she was dressed in her traditional blue and white, with some pink in her under-robe, with a lovely face, and in her hands was a long, gold and pearl rosary. I'd heard the teachers in the Kindergarten class I sat with describe what a rosary was, and what it was used for, but being a Protestant, I was taught to shun "vain repetitions."

Fast forward a few years. My family began investigating older traditions in the church, one of them being the strings of prayer beads that became known as the rosary. It was a tradition that went farther back than any of us guessed. Furthermore, we found that the Anglican church, the church tradition we came to feel most at home in, had its own version of the rosary. We quickly fell in love with the calming, meditative, rhythm of the prayers, and how they gave us something to focus on and minimize distractions.

So, what does the Anglican rosary look like? And how is it different than the one used by the church of Rome? The prayer beads favored by the Anglicans have a different structure than the strings used by the church of Rome. Anglican prayer beads are made up of four seven-bead sections, called weeks. The weeks are divided by larger beads called cruciform beads. At the end (or beginning) of the string, is a single, large, bead called the Invitatory bead, and under this bead hangs a medal, cross, or other devotional items.



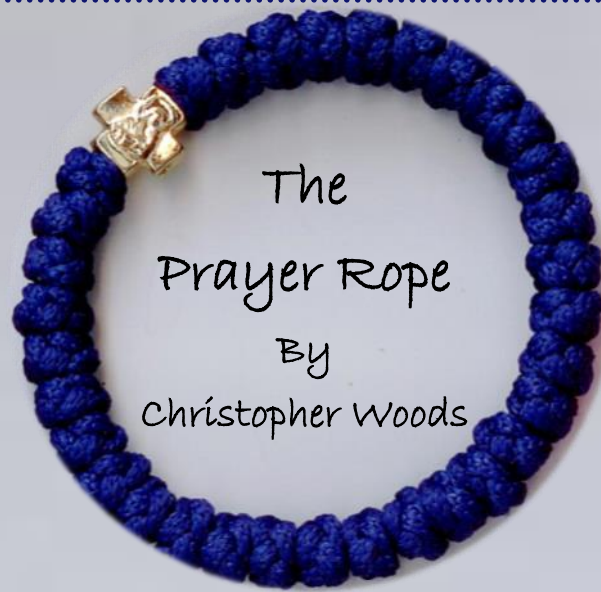
I made each set of rosary beads used by my family, finding the work itself calming and meditative. The prayers we use are mainly from scripture or the works of the saints, connecting past and present, spreading light and calm. I see these practices connecting me to the Great Cloud of witnesses who spend their time in heaven praising God and praying for the Church, and to my brothers and sisters who are still alive.

From my personal set of beads dangle two saint's medals, gifts from a Catholic friend. One is St. Nicholas of Myra, the other St. Therese of Lisieux. Nicholas was a man who defended the faith admirably and was generous with gifts to the poor and to children, while Therese spoke comfort to me when I felt discouraged in my own "littleness", as she called it. The images on the medals remind me of the Great Cloud, that these people, long ago departed, are praying for me. Perhaps not by name, as I don't believe that the departed Saints gain omniscience, but they pray for the church, that means they pray for me.

With the strings that connect me to past and present now in place, I've come to value meditative prayer. When I feel anxious, I can pray with the tactile stimulation provided with the beads, grounding me. I can pray without having to stumble over my words in public. When I can't think of how to pray for a friend, I can pull out my beads. When I pray them, I remember that I am part of a long string of prayers, always coming before the Father, from the foundation of the world to the end of time.

To learn some different ways to pray the Anglican rosary, visit
kingofpeace.org/prayerbeads.htm





A fictionalized account of a true story.

Light streamed in through the windows. The students crowded around the tables, appraising each other's half-finished icons, washing paint from brushes and plates, touching up a detail here or there. The talk varied: sometimes it focused on the subject at hand, but more often than not it wandered. Yesterday's jokes were retold, and new ones made. The room itself was not conducive to our purpose. Cutouts and silly pictures coated the walls between the windows. The tables were close together, encouraging students to talk while they worked on their icons. I sat on the floor in a corner, holding my knotted prayer rope loosely. The instructors waited until all the students had arrived before calling everyone's attention. I closed my eyes and began to pray. *Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner.*

As the class began, the chatter immediately ceased. The instructor lay out the goals for the session, as she passed around the paint. "We'll begin working on the face. You'll need a mix of yellow and brown, with just a hint of red." *Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner. "After the first coat, you'll need to redraw the lines, so you know where to put the highlights."*

For a little while, she walked around the room, examining students' progress and helping those who were struggling. But once everyone was progressing smoothly, the instructor sat down at her own table, and continued work on her own icon. For a while, there was silence. But in this room, with all these people, silence never lasted long. *Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner.*

At the table closest to me, one of the students started a conversation. I didn't quite hear it, but I could tell it wasn't about the icons. The talk jumped a table and sparked a separate one across the room. I tried to refocus, and for a moment, I was successful. The talk faded from my head, and only the prayer remained. *Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner.*

I opened my eyes, and noticed someone new in the room. He hunched over one of the tables, whispering into a student's ear. I couldn't see his face—he wore a red hoodie and, despite being inside, he had the hood up. The student glanced up from his work and told a joke he'd just remembered. At the same moment, the newcomer stood straight, looked at me, and pulled back the hood. His thin mouth was smiling above a trim, pointed beard.

"Hello there."

"I should've guessed," I said. *Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner.*

"Saved you the trouble." He leaned against the table. "How do you like it?"

"The icon?" I asked.

He grimaced at the word. “No, the joke.”

“Didn’t hear it.” *Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner.*

“I could repeat it,” he offered.

“Thanks, but no. I’m trying to focus.” I closed my eyes again. Again, the room faded away, and I was alone with the prayer. I prayed for all the students here, that they might truly understand what they were doing. *Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on us, sinners.*

“Hey, pray-boy.”

I opened my eyes, annoyed at the interruption. The newcomer was standing over a different table, this time. He reached out and flicked the student’s paintbrush, causing a slight smear on the icon. The student bit her lip in frustration.

Dashing over to the newcomer, I grabbed his shirt collar. “None of that. It’s hard enough without your interference.”

The newcomer raised his hands, smiling. “Hey, hey, take it easy. I’m just playing around.”

“You wanna play,” I said, shaking him, “You play with me. Leave these students alone. Cause now that I know there’s an enemy in the room, I ain’t leavin’ till I see you far away from here.” I pushed him to the floor, took a step back, and crouched into a fighting stance, still holding my prayer rope. *Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on us, sinners.*

Chuckling, the newcomer pulled himself up. “Oh, I was hoping you’d ask. By getting you to fight me so realistically, I can keep you distracted.” He charged, grabbed me around the waist, and tossed me across the room. Despite crashing into the wall, I barely felt the pain. And no one else in the room noticed.

I jumped up again, running back toward the newcomer. He neatly side-stepped me, at the same time whispering into a student’s ear. Spinning on my heel, I punched him in the face.

The student looked up, opened his mouth to say something, realized he’d forgotten it, and returned to his icon.

“Why do you fight for them?” the newcomer asked, grabbing my wrist. I brought the edge of my other hand down on his, and he let go. “You don’t even like them,” he finished.

“But I do love them,” I said, aiming a kick at his knee. He jumped back, then leaned forward again and landed a blow on my shoulder.

“How can you love them?” he asked as I staggered to regain my balance. “Look at them. Idiots, the lot of them. They don’t understand the power of these icons. And their misunderstanding allows me in.” He smiled, and kicked me in the stomach. I crumpled in a heap, but still, the pain was less than I expected. *Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on us sinners.*

“There’s at least one girl you couldn’t touch even if I wasn’t here,” I said, slowly pulling myself up.

“You underestimate my power, boy,” the newcomer growled, “and you overestimate your own.” He grabbed me by the throat and thrust me up against the wall. My feet dangled a few inches from the floor. “A shame that girl can’t see our fight. You could use her help.”

Despite his hold, I managed to gasp out a few words. “The power I use is not my own.” Wrapping my prayer rope around my fingers like brass knuckles, I struck his forehead. He howled in pain, dropping me and falling back. I was first to recover, and pinned him to the floor. “You will leave now and never come back. You will leave these kids to write* their icons, surrounded by God and all his saints. And if I ever see you again—”

The newcomer chuckled. “You can’t kill me, boy.” He pulled his legs up and kicked me in the stomach. I flew—no, fell—straight up, onto the ceiling, and lay there, staring down at all the students below me. The newcomer stood up, wiping his forehead; it bled where I’d struck him with

*The act of creating an icon is not called *painting* but *writing* in part because an icon is meant to be Scripture in a visual form, but largely due to the English translation of Russian art terms.

the prayer rope. But he ignored his wound, and once again circulated the tables. In a short while, the students were chatting with each other. Their brush-strokes became sloppier, and the ones who weren't chatting became more and more frustrated. It was these students I cared for most, because I was once like them...

I hunched over my icon, trying to focus, trying to blot out the raucous conversation. A CD of Byzantine hymns played in the background, but no one listened to it. I could barely hear it. The rise and fall of notes like the countless unnoticed waves of the sea—that melody. I knew it. I'd sung it. But where, where, where, where?

Of course. Dad, gently conducting the music, taking a moment to stop and say, "Please. You need to pay close attention to the music, to the prayer! It can be so beautiful when you pay attention, when you sing prayerfully—and I know you can!"

Tchaikovsky's Cherubic Hymn. Tears escaped my eyes and slid softly down my cheeks. The beauty of the music was such a stark contrast to the mundane conversations all around me.

"Not bad, not bad, you're doing well." The instructor was looking over my shoulder encouraging me.

I looked up, unable to hide my tears. "Please," I said brokenly, "May I be excused for a while? I need to be alone."

The instructor looked a bit more concerned. "Of course," she said. I got up before she said anything more, and left the building by a side door. There was a reservoir right next to the building, and a small bench on the shore. Stumbling, unable to hold my sobs anymore, I sat heavily on the bench, took off my glasses, and wept. I wept because the other students didn't understand the intense holiness of what they were doing. I wept because they profaned the sacred with their talk. I wept because I wanted them to understand, to rejoice in the beauty of their icons. I wept because I felt far from God. I wept until I was empty.

And in that moment, when all I knew was sorrow that God should be forgotten, even as we record the face of his Son—in that moment, I remembered. I remembered that in the chapel, a candle burned next to the tabernacle. And in the tabernacle, God was present. I stood, took my glasses, but didn't put them on. I walked to the chapel, straight up to the altar, and lay myself down, cruciform.

Now here I was, flat on my back, arms spread wide, lying on the ceiling and wondering how to get down. My fingers loosened, and the prayer rope fell onto the floor—leaving me alone on the ceiling. The newcomer shot a glance in my direction, smiled crookedly, and flicked another paintbrush off course.

I leapt to my feet, and launched myself at the newcomer's head. Rather than knocking him over, though, I fell back up to the ceiling. He had somehow managed to trap me up here, rendering me unable to fight him.

Or was I?

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

I could feel a slight downward pull. My feet rested less heavily on the ceiling, and more blood was in my head than usual.

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

My feet left the ceiling completely. I hovered, upside-down, in the middle of the room. The



newcomer was busy whispering.

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

I began to rotate, but slowly, gently. I felt a bit faint as the blood flowed out of my head, but soon, my feet were pointed toward the floor, not the ceiling, and my head felt clearer than it had in a long while.

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

I floated gently to the ground, and was glad to feel the floor underneath my feet once again. Retrieving my prayer rope, I faced the newcomer once again.

“You will regret not leaving when I gave you the chance,” I said, claspings the prayer rope firmly. He turned to me, scowling, about to speak. I didn’t give him the chance. “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.”

A bright light emanated from the prayer rope. As I continued repeating the prayer, it strengthened into a beam, which burst forth and pierced the cut on the newcomer’s forehead. He screeched, as the light pulsated throughout his entire being and banished him from the room.

I opened my eyes, and found myself sitting in the corner once again. The instructor raised her voice, so she could be heard. “Well, I think that’s enough for this session. Time for lunch.”





Ode to Mary

By Sarah Levesque

Hail Mary who conceived the Living
Word, God's only Son,
Full of grace so without sin, example
for everyone,
The Lord is with you always when you
respond to our pleas;
Blessed are you who gave to us the
holy Rosary.
Among women, radiant queen, you're
most loving, peaceful, wise
And blessed the fruit of your womb
Who you hold before our eyes -
Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God Who
takes away our sins;
Holy Mary, moth'r of God, help us let
him in!
Pray for us sinners now, my queen, as
we journey through this strife,
And at the hour of death pray we
might gain Eternal Life.

Never Alone

By Amanda Pizzolatto

Growing shadows, silent alleys, angry tweets, and ignored messages, that feeling of being alone even in a crowded room. Abusive relationships, lost causes, a world where no one listens and everyone screams to be heard. A recipe for loneliness, the real great fear of mankind. Death is kind in comparison to loneliness (at least for most, there are some that prefer being all alone and wouldn't go crazy because of it), for who truly wants to be alone? The world boasts that romantic love is all we need, and proceeds to warp our views on love in general. How does one escape this, besides addiction? Perhaps there is another answer, one that requires more than just communication, but also faith? What do I mean? Well, I am talking about the Church, and not just one part of the Church, the physical Church still on Earth, but the spiritual Church too, the members of the Faith who have left us and gone to their eternal reward (well, as a Catholic, we believe that not all make it there, and there are some who must wait in Purgatory for a while before getting to share in God's glory, but that's a discussion for another time). Having this Body of Christ, though they might not seem to be all around us physically, gives us a large family to whom we can go to for help. God created us to be social creatures, but He didn't mean for us to just go to Him. It delights Him when we interact with others as well as Him, and that's because He wants us to be one big, happy family.

Oh, how could I forget, the angels are part of that too! They adore us like an older sibling adores a younger sibling, we're cute until we're naughty. Or we start blaming the demons for all of our mistakes and not taking any responsibility for them or growing from them. But they, like the blessed in Heaven, are as willing to help us as siblings help each other out. Except they don't



moan and groan about it like some older siblings do from time to time (cough cough me cough



cough). However, unlike the saints, the majority of the angels are given assignments; countries, people, even planets to watch over. And it's not because God can't do this all by Himself, He likes handing out things to do to those who follow His Will because He likes watching us, and the angels, give others joy.

Because it is in giving that we receive, we receive the joys of helping others or giving to

others. We weren't meant to be selfish prigs, but because of the Fall, we are. Some find it easier than others to give, and to forgive, but even those others can learn if they open their hearts to God. That's part of the beauty of being a member of Christ's Body, He tells us that no matter what we've done wrong in our lives, if we understand that we have done wrong and set about to change our ways, He will forgive us. And as fallen human beings who fall constantly, it's a comforting thought that, if we keep trying to prevent more slip-ups and keep on getting back up after we've fallen, one day, we may see our Creator, our King, and our family in Heaven.

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Jesus, Unity & Community

Sarah Levesque

As I look around at our society today, I am greatly saddened by the sheer number of people who call themselves Christian but don't seem to be in any sort of relationship with Christ or don't associate themselves with a community of believers. Many seem to be under the impression that if they are good people, they will go to Heaven. Unfortunately, how one may be "good" is terribly unclear and, more importantly, the whole idea is unbiblical. In John 15: 1-8 (KJV), Jesus says,

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

He makes it clear that if a branch is not connected to the Vine - that is, Himself - then that branch cannot bear fruit. Further, if it does not accept nourishment from the Vine, but breaks itself off from the vine, that branch dies and is cast into the fire. One must have a connection, a relationship, to the Lord in order to not be cast into the fire, that is, Hell. One must be nourished by Him in order not to wither.



Now, how many vines have only one branch? Not many. Most of the vines I've seen are a jumble of interwoven branches that are hard to separate. So it should be in the Church – people's lives should be interwoven with the lives of other members of the Church. We need community to survive, especially in our increasingly unbiblical society. This is shown throughout the Bible, but let me direct you to Hebrews 10:23-25 (KJV):

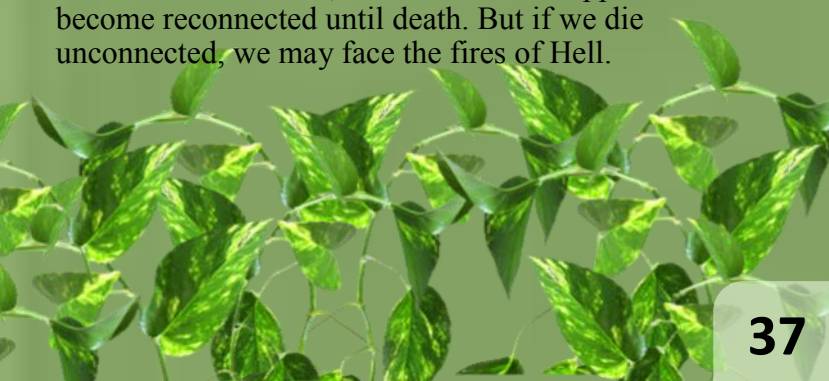
Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

We need to build each other up, to sharpen each other “as iron sharpeneth iron”, like Proverbs 27:17 says. Likewise, Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12 each talk about how, as members of the body of Christ, we need to be in union with other members in order to function, as we each have different abilities, skills and gifts. Both passages encourage members to do what they can to the best of their ability, and not be jealous of other members, for we each have our own service to give. God the Father, whom Jesus calls “the husbandman” or “the farmer”, may use our community members (be they family, friends, church members, etc.) to do his pruning, that each branch may bear more fruit. Of course, there are many other ways of pruning, though many of them involve suffering of some sort – a plant is pruned by cutting off one or more pieces in order that the branch may grow properly and according to the will of the one tending it.

Without community – without being built up by others and building up others, without encouraging each other, without serving each other, without loving each other, without allowing ourselves to be pruned – can we even claim to be in union with Christ? For just after He spoke of being the vine, He said,

As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. (John 15: 9-12)

Therefore, we must not forsake community, but seek it out. We must not neglect to regularly attend church or worship with others, lest by avoiding the other branches of the Vine, the other members of the Body, we become disconnected with the Vine and the Body itself. If we do become disconnected, there are endless opportunities to become reconnected until death. But if we die unconnected, we may face the fires of Hell.



Bible Quiz!

Answers on the following page

1. Who built the Ark and saved the animals from the Great Flood?
 - A. Moses
 - B. David
 - C. Solomon
 - D. Noah
2. Who led the Israelites out of Egypt?
 - A. Abraham
 - B. Moses
 - C. Jacob
 - D. Elijah
3. What Jewish holiday celebrates the exodus/escape from Egypt?
 - A. Passover
 - B. Hanukkah
 - C. Rosh Hashanah
 - D. Yom Kippur
4. Who built the first Jewish Temple?
 - A. Moses
 - B. David
 - C. Solomon
 - D. Jesus
5. Where was Jesus born?
 - A. Jerusalem
 - B. Nazareth
 - C. Bethlehem
 - D. Nineveh
6. Who was the first Christian martyr?
 - A. Peter
 - B. Paul
 - C. Andrew
 - D. Stephen
7. The Apostle Paul was originally a Jew who persecuted Christians.
 - A. True
 - B. False

The answers are listed on the following page

Bible Quiz Answers!

Questions on the previous page

Bible Quiz Answers

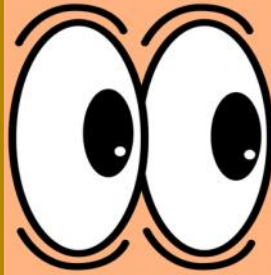
- 1) d - Noah built the Ark (see Genesis 6-9).
- 2) b - Moses, along with his brother Aaron, lead the Isrealites out of Egypt during the Exodus (see Exodus 3 and following).
- 3) a - Passover celebrates the exodus of the Isrealites from Egypt (see Exodus 12). Hanukkah marks the victory of the Maccabees and the rededication of the Jewish Temple (see 1 Maccabees 4); Rosh Hashanah is the Jewish new year; and Yom Kippur is the Jewish Day of Atonement as pre-scribed in Leviticus 23:27.
- 4) c - King Solomon, son of David, built the first Jewish Temple (see 1 Kings 6).
- 5) c - Bethlehem was where Jesus was born (see Luke 2:4).
- 6) d - St. Stephen was the first Christian martyr, having been stoned soon after he was appointed the first deacon.
- 7) a - True - St Paul the Apostle - then known as Saul - originally persecuted Christians, as He did not originally believe Jesus was the Messiah, and thus thought the Christians were being blasphemous (see Acts 9).

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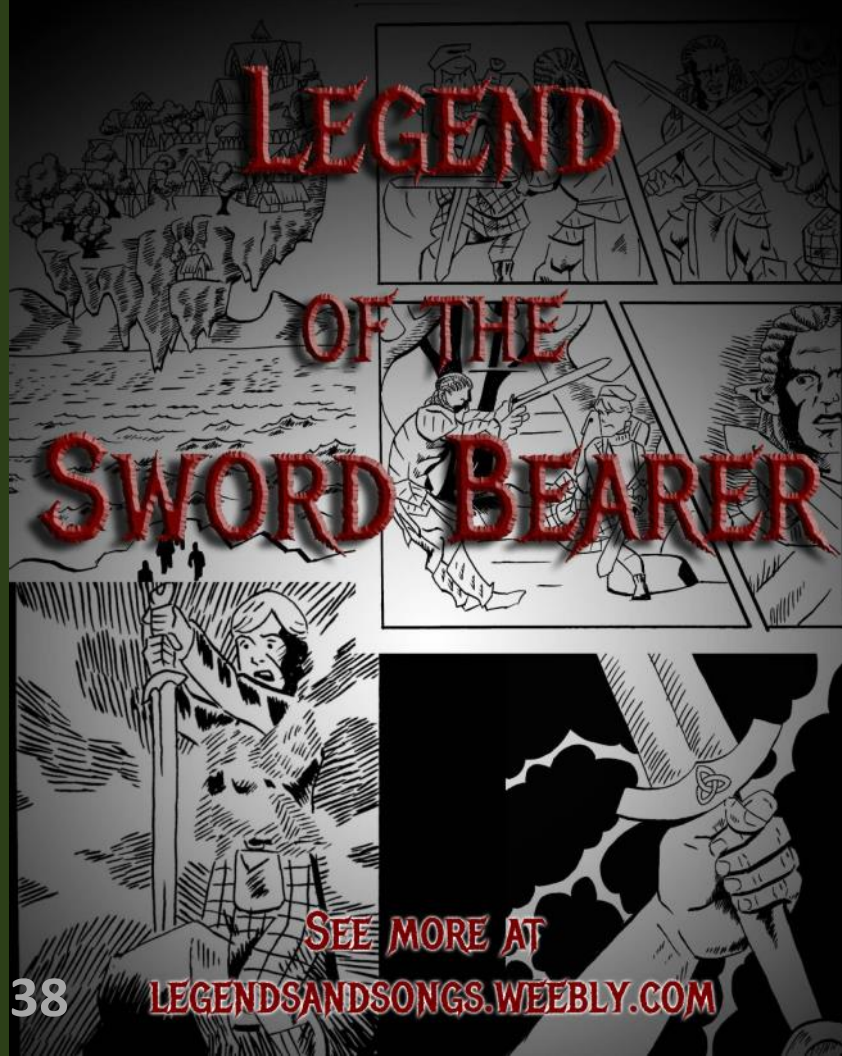
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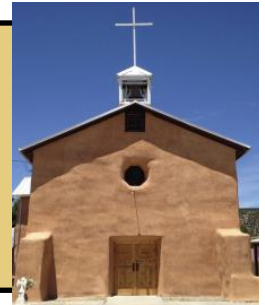


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